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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

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**C/NIC Chrono**

National Intelligence Council

NIC #02788-85  
30 May 1985MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central IntelligenceFROM: [REDACTED]  
Assistant National Intelligence Officer for Europe

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SUBJECT: The Trend in Soviet-Bulgarian Relations

1. We have seen a behind-the-scenes pattern of growing conflicts of interest and policy differences in Bulgarian-Soviet relations for some time. [REDACTED] the pattern continued into late 1984 but without yet causing much serious concern in Moscow. Since that time, however, [REDACTED] Bulgaria's Pact allies say that Moscow is displeased with Zhivkov's clumsy handling of the campaign to absorb the Turkish minority. In sum, we think this latest disagreement is part of a gradual deterioration in the Soviet-Bulgarian relationship. And, the trend indicates the broader difficulties Moscow encounters as their clients each try to find their own solutions to national problems without Soviet tutelage.

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2. [REDACTED] the Soviet leadership has no serious concerns about the loyalty of the Zhivkov regime which loyally adheres to Soviet foreign policy initiatives. But since the mid 1970s [REDACTED] policy differences have arisen as Bulgaria tests its ability to pursue its own interests without strict adherence to Soviet guidelines.

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-- Moscow is skeptical about Zhivkov's efforts to create a sophisticated modern industry as it is reducing Bulgaria's role as an agricultural exporter to the Soviet market.

-- Though the Kremlin sees benefit in Sofia's pursuit of a Balkan nuclear free zone, the Soviets regard its efforts at Balkan economic cooperation as a threat to Bulgaria's CEMA commitments.

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[redacted]

assertion. For example, Zhivkov sacked Party Secretary Aleksandr Lilov -- a Soviet favorite and a major rival--in September 1983 and the move reportedly took Soviet leaders by surprise.)

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3. We tend to see these difficulties as continuing--no matter if Zhivkov remains in power for a long period or is replaced soon.

[redacted]

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NIO/USSR concurs.